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Letter dated 16 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward a letter from Osman Saleh, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, dated 15 March 2012 (see annex), addressed to you in connection with the official statement of Ethiopia to the effect that "its army has carried out an incursion 18 kms deep into sovereign Eritrean territory to conduct an attack on Eritrean army outposts".

I would be most grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated and issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Araya **Desta**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 16 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

As blatantly announced in the official statement of the regime, "the Ethiopian army has carried out an incursion 18 kms deep into sovereign Eritrean territory to conduct an attack on Eritrean army outposts". The Ethiopian regime has further bragged that it "will continue to support 'opposition' forces to topple the Eritrean Government".

This reckless conduct is not surprising. Nor is it a new development or an escalation of hostilities that is taking place for the first time. It is part and parcel of the numerous unlawful and provocative attacks that have been going on intermittently in the past 10 years.

The timing of the attack, however, appears to have been deliberately chosen to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the arbitral ruling of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission. And in this sense, it amplifies acts of flagrant aggression that continue to be perpetrated by the Ethiopian regime with impunity, against Eritrea, for over 10 years.

As it may be recalled, the Government of Eritrea had urged the Security Council, through its letter of 28 February 2012 (S/2012/126), to shoulder its responsibilities and take appropriate measures against the myriad and unlawful acts of aggression and occupation. The attack that the Ethiopian regime launched today constitutes a malicious response to Eritrea's pleas.

It is patently clear that the Ethiopian regime could not have unleashed such a flagrant act of aggression with such audacity, without the protection and succour of the United States in the Security Council. The Ethiopian regime, indeed, seems as if it is baiting the international community, and in particular the Security Council, to "condone" its unlawful acts that threaten regional peace and stability.

The people and Government of Eritrea shall not entertain and will not be entrapped by deceitful ploys that are aimed at derailing and eclipsing the fundamental issues. But how long will the Security Council continue to tolerate the flouting of the rule of law and the blatant violation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of a Member State?

In the event, the Government of Eritrea urges, for the umpteenth time, the Security Council to shoulder its legal and moral responsibilities and to take appropriate measures to rectify acts of aggression against Eritrea's sovereign territories and to ensure justice and respect for the rule of law.